WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Export of Agro-Products to Australia

876. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has a vast potential and better market access for its products in Australia;

(b) if so, the details of the opportunities that the Indian agro and rural industries have in Australia; and

(c) the steps being taken by his Ministry to export more and more agro products to Autstralia?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) to (c) Potential does exist for export of Indian agro products to Australia. However, market access for agricultural products to Australia is subject to strict Quarantine Regulations. The steps taken by the Government to promote Indian agro products include regular discussions with the Australian authorities through the mechanisms of Joint Ministerial commission and Joint business Council, and regular contact between the Export Inspection Unit and the Australian Quarantine and Inspections Services for conclusion of a bilateral Agreement to address mutual concerns. Agricultural products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has regularly participated in the international Fine Food Fair in Australia to promote Indian agro products.

Deteriorating rural and cottage industries

†877. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the condition of traditional rural cottage industries is continuously deteriorating;

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to promote rural industries; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) to (c) The Khadi and Village Industries Sector consists essentially of conventional (traditional) rural cottage industries. Considerable efforts have been made by the Government for the development of Khadi and Village Industries including conventional rural cottage industries. The assistance provided to this sector consists of margin money assistance under Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP), training, technological and marketing support. As a result, village industries have been registering growth in production and employment.

In order to further strengthen the KVI sector, a package was announced on 14.05.2001, which is now under various stages of implementation. The package mainly consists of Rebate Policy for five years, option of Rebate and Market Development Assistance (MDA), insurance cover to Khadi artisans, emphasis on improvement of khadi products, creation of packaging and design facilities, measures to promote marketing, brand building, cluster development, facus on core areas and provisions of additional working capital etc.

PMRY in HP

878. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the targets set up to generate employment opportunities under the Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana in Himachal Pradesh during the last three years, district-wise; and

(b) the number of educated unemployed persons who have been benefited in the State during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) Based on the reports received from the State Government, the district-wise details of targets during the last three years, *i.e.* 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 under the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) for Himachal Pradesh are given in the Statement (*See* below)

(b) Based on the reports from the Reserve Bank of India, loans have been disbursed to 5839 educated unemployed youth during the above mentioned period in Himachal Pradesh.